

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 607

By Kelsey

A RESOLUTION to recognize and commend New Olivet Baptist Church on the occasion of its relocation.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should recognize and commend those venerable institutions of faith that have not only left an indelible impact on their communities but have also achieved new heights of prestige and stature; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable organization is New Olivet Baptist Church in Memphis, which recently began the process of moving to a new location at Woodland Hills in Cordova; and

WHEREAS, led by Reverend Kenneth T. Whalum, Jr., New Olivet Baptist Church has been a Memphis staple at its home on Southern Avenue for more than forty years; and

WHEREAS, land-locked and confined by the city streets at its current one-acre location, the church could no longer support its expanding congregation, and a new house of worship was sorely needed; and

WHEREAS, many of New Olivet Baptist Church's 2,000 members had long since moved out of the city and now live in the Cordova suburbs. Desiring to move the church with its flock, Reverend Whalum saw the path for a new location made clear; and

WHEREAS, New Olivet Baptist Church will be located at the former Woodland Hills Events Center on Woodland Hills Drive, just west of the Houston Levee. The congregation's new home is a fifteen-acre campus that features three buildings, a lush, wooded landscape, and a fish pond; and

WHEREAS, the new church will be called the New Olivet Worship Center at Woodland Hills; and

WHEREAS, although the church is leaving Southern Avenue, its presence will be felt in the City of Memphis for generations to come, as its charter school, the Arrow Academy of Excellence, will remain a shining gem of educational eminence in the Orange Mound area; and

WHEREAS, other endeavors conducted by Reverend Kenneth Whalum and New Olivet Baptist Church that will long be cherished by the Memphis community include Bust-A-Move Mondays, a seventeen-year-old initiative to bolster black-owned businesses, and Memphis Youth Manifesto, a youth-led social justice group that organizes peaceful demonstrations; and

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that the members of this General Assembly applaud New Olivet Baptist Church on finding a new home, acknowledging the challenges of a growing congregation in an ever-changing urban area and the church's success in adapting and flourishing in the face of such struggles; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and commend New Olivet Baptist Church on the occasion of its relocation and extend to each parishioner our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.